C. G. 793 hereditary rights. The priest, called khevis beri "elder of the valley," khutsi "priest" or dek'anozi "dean," pronounced the ceremonial C. G. [782] prayers and sacrificed the sheep and cows offered as victims. The kadagi or dzhvaris C. G. [791] meene "interpreter," "tongue of the dzhvari," a kind of shaman, pronounced the will of the khat'i. The medroshe "standard bearer" or khat'is pekhi "foot of the khat'i" carried the sacred banner (drosha) on festive days. A special functionary attended to the brewing of the sacred beer, a custom borrowed from the C. G. [775] Ossetes. The beer was drunk at the annual festivals which were attended by all the "serfs" of the khat'i.

In Svanetia the functions of the Khevsur khevis beri were performed by priests not regularly ordained and without any theological training; they were called bap (from Greek C. G. [771] pappas). The numerous ancient churches were neglected and were only used for storing the vessels, vestments and books relating to the divine service; these were jealously C. G. 796 guarded from alienation. Many originally Christian feasts and Saint's days were celebrated with prayers, drinking of home-made brandy and eating of sacrificed animals and C. G. [769] fancy bread of different traditional shapes. Similar rites were observed on the commemoration days of the dead which were performed at fixed intervals.